

Article 26.

Regional Public Transportation Authority.

§ 160A-600. Title.

This Article shall be known and may be cited as the "Regional Public Transportation Authority Act." (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-601. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Authority" means a Regional Public Transportation Authority as defined by subdivision (6) of this section.
- (2) "Board of Trustees" means the governing board of the Authority, in which the general legislative powers of the Authority are vested.
- (3) "Population" means the number of persons residing in respective areas as defined and enumerated in the most recent decennial federal census.
- (4) "Public transportation" means transportation of passengers whether or not for hire by any means of conveyance, including but not limited to a street or elevated railway or guideway, subway, motor vehicle or motor bus, carpool or vanpool, either publicly or privately owned and operated, holding itself out to the general public for the transportation of persons within or working within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority, excluding charter, tour, or sight-seeing service.
- (5) "Public transportation system" means, without limitation, a combination of real and personal property, structures, improvements, buildings, equipment, vehicle parking or other facilities, railroads and railroad rights-of-way whether held in fee simple by quitclaim or easement, and rights-of-way, or any combination thereof, used or useful for the purposes of public transportation. "Public transportation system" however, does not include streets, roads, or highways except those for ingress and egress to vehicle parking.
- (6) "Regional Public Transportation Authority," means a body corporate and politic organized in accordance with the provisions of this Article for the purposes, with the powers and subject to the restrictions hereinafter set forth.
- (7) "Unit of local government" means any county, city, town or municipality of this State, and any other political subdivision, public corporation, Authority, or district in this State, which is or may be authorized by law to acquire, establish, construct, enlarge, improve, maintain, own, and operate public transportation systems.
- (8) "Unit of local government's chief administrative official" means the county manager, city manager, town manager, or other person, by whatever title he shall be known, in whom the responsibility for the unit of local government's administrative duties is vested. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-602. Definition of territorial jurisdiction of Authority.

An authority may be created for any area of the State that, at the time of creation of the authority, meets the following criteria:

- (1) The area consists of three counties:

- (2) At least one of those counties contains at least part of a County Research and Production Service District established pursuant to Part 2 of Article 16 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes; and
- (3) The other two counties each:
 - a. Contain at least one unit of local government that is designated by the Governor of the State of North Carolina as a recipient pursuant to Section 9 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended; and
 - b. Are adjacent to at least one county that contains at least part of a County Research and Production Service District established pursuant to Part 2 of Article 16 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-603. Creation of Authority.

(a) The Boards of Commissioners of all three counties within an area for which an authority may be created as defined in G.S. 160A-602 may by resolution signify their determination to organize an authority under the provisions of this Article. Each of such resolutions shall be adopted after a public hearing thereon, notice of which hearing shall be given by publication at least once, not less than 10 days prior to the date fixed for such hearing, in a newspaper having a general circulation in the county. Such notice shall contain a brief statement of the substance of the proposed resolution, shall set forth the proposed articles of incorporation of the Authority and shall state the time and place of the public hearing to be held thereof. No county shall be required to make any other publication of such resolution under the provisions of any other law.

(b) Each such resolution shall include articles of incorporation which shall set forth:

- (1) The name of the authority;
- (2) A statement that such authority is organized under this Article; and
- (3) The names of the three organizing counties.

(c) A certified copy of each of such resolutions signifying the determination to organize an authority under the provisions of this Article shall be filed with the Secretary of State, together with proof of publication of the notice of hearing on each of such resolutions. If the Secretary of State finds that the resolutions, including the articles of incorporation, conform to the provisions of this Article and that the notices of hearing were properly published, he shall file such resolutions and proofs of publication in his office and shall issue a certificate of incorporation under the seal of the State and shall record the same in an appropriate book of record in his office. The issuance of such certificate of incorporation by the Secretary of State shall constitute the Authority a public body and body politic and corporate of the State of North Carolina. Said certificate of incorporation shall be conclusive evidence of the fact that such authority has been duly created and established under the provisions of this Article.

(d) When the Authority has been duly organized and its officers elected as herein provided the secretary of the Authority shall certify to the Secretary of State the names and addresses of such officers as well as the address of the principal office of the Authority.

(e) The Authority may become a Designated Recipient pursuant to the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-604. Territorial jurisdiction of the Authority.

(a) The territorial jurisdiction of any authority created pursuant to this Article shall be coterminous with the boundaries of the three counties that organized it.

(b) Except as provided by this Article, the jurisdiction of the Authority may include all local public passenger transportation operating within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority, but the Authority may not take over the operation of any existing public transportation without the consent of the owner.

(c) The Authority shall not have jurisdiction over public transportation subject to the jurisdiction of and regulated by the Interstate Commerce Commission, nor shall it have jurisdiction over intrastate public transportation classified as common carriers of passengers by the North Carolina Utilities Commission. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-605. Membership; officers; compensation.

(a) The governing body of an authority is the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall consist of 13 members, appointed as follows:

(1) The county with the greatest population shall be allocated five members to be appointed as follows:

- a. Two by the board of commissioners of that county;
- b. Two by the city council of the city containing the largest population within that county; and
- c. One by the city council of the city containing the second largest population within that county;

(2) The county with the next greatest population shall be allocated three members to be appointed as follows:

- a. One by the board of commissioners of that county;
- b. One by the city council of the city containing the largest population within that county; and
- c. One jointly by that board of commissioners and city council, by procedures agreed on between them;

(3) The county with the least population shall be allocated two members to be appointed as follows:

- a. One by the board of commissioners of that county; and
- b. One by the city council of the city containing the largest population within that county; and

(4) Three members of the Board of Transportation appointed by the Secretary of Transportation, to serve as ex officio nonvoting members.

(b) Voting members of the Board of Trustees shall serve for terms of four years, provided that one-half of the initial appointments shall be for two-year terms, to be determined by lot at the first meeting of the Board of Trustees. Initial terms of office shall commence upon approval by the Secretary of State of the articles of incorporation. The members appointed by the Secretary of Transportation shall serve at his pleasure.

(c) An appointing authority may appoint one of its members to the Board of Trustees. Service on the Board of Trustees may be in addition to any other office which a person is entitled to hold. Each voting member of the Board of Trustees may hold elective public office as defined by G.S. 128-1.1(d).

(d) Members of the Board of Trustees shall reside within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority as defined by G.S. 160A-604.

(e) The Board of Trustees shall annually elect from its membership a Chairperson, and a Vice-Chairperson, and shall annually elect a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

(f) Members of the Board of Trustees shall receive the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00) as compensation for attendance at each duly conducted meeting of the Authority. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-606. Voting; removal.

(a) Six members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Except as provided by G.S. 160A-605(a)(4), each member shall have one vote.

(b) Each member of the Board of Trustees may be removed with or without cause by the appointer(s). If the appointment was made jointly by two boards, the removal must be concurred in by both.

(c) Appointments to fill vacancies shall be made for the remainder of the unexpired term by the respective appointer(s) charged with the responsibility for making such appointments pursuant to G.S. 160A-605. All members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, unless removed from office. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-607. Advisory committees.

The Board of Trustees may provide for the selection of such advisory committees as it may find appropriate, which may or may not include members of the Board of Trustees. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-607.1. Special tax board.

(a) The special tax board of an authority shall be composed of two representatives from each of the counties organizing the authority appointed annually by the board of commissioners of each of those counties' members at the first regular meeting thereof in January, except that the initial members shall serve a term beginning on the date that the initial terms of the board of trustees of that authority begin under G.S. 160A-605(b), and ending on the last day of December of that year. Each member of the special tax board must be a member of the board of commissioners of the county by which he was appointed. Membership on the special tax board may be held in addition to the offices authorized by G.S. 128-1 or G.S. 128-1.1. Said representatives shall hold office from their appointment until their successors are appointed and qualified, except that when any member of the special tax board ceases for any reason to be a member of the board of commissioners of the county by which he was appointed, he shall simultaneously cease to be a member of said special tax board. Upon the occurrence of any vacancy on said special tax board, the vacancy shall be filled within 30 days after notice thereof by the board of commissioners of the county having a vacancy in its representation. Each member of the special tax board, before entering upon his duties, shall take and subscribe an oath or affirmation to support the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this State and to discharge faithfully the duties of his office; and a record of each such oath shall be filed in the minutes of the respective participating units of local government.

(b) The special tax board shall meet regularly at such places and on such dates as are determined by the special tax board. The initial meeting shall be called jointly by the chairmen of the boards of commissioners of the counties organizing the authority. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the special tax board on his own initiative and shall be called by him upon request of two or more members of the board. All members shall be notified in writing at least 24 hours in advance of such meeting. A majority of the members of the special tax board

shall constitute a quorum. No vacancy in the membership of the special tax board shall impair the right of a quorum to exercise all the rights and perform all the duties of the special tax board. No action, other than an action to recess or adjourn, shall be taken except upon a majority vote of the entire authorized membership of said special tax board. Each member, including the chairman, shall be entitled to vote on any question.

(c) The special tax board shall elect annually in January from among its members a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer, except that initial officers shall be elected at the first meeting of the special tax board. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-608. Purpose of the Authority.

The purpose of the Authority shall be to finance, provide, operate, and maintain for a safe, clean, reliable, adequate, convenient, energy efficient, economically and environmentally sound public transportation system for the service area of the Authority through the granting of franchises, ownership and leasing of terminals, buses and other transportation facilities and equipment, and otherwise through the exercise of the powers and duties conferred upon it, in order to enhance mobility in the region and encourage sound growth patterns.

Such a service, facility, or function shall be financed, provided, operated, or maintained in the service area of the Authority either in addition to or to a greater or lesser extent than services, facilities, or functions are financed, provided, operated, or maintained for the entirety of the respective units of local government. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-609. Service area of the Authority.

The service area of the Authority shall be as determined by the Board of Trustees consistent with its purpose, but shall not exceed the territorial jurisdiction of the authority and any area it may provide service to under G.S. 160A-610. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-610. General powers of the Authority.

The general powers of the Authority shall include any or all of the following:

- (1) To sue and be sued;
- (2) To have a seal;
- (3) To make rules and regulations, not inconsistent with this Chapter, for its organization and internal management;
- (4) To employ persons deemed necessary to carry out the functions and duties assigned to them by the Authority and to fix their compensation, within the limit of available funds;
- (5) With the approval of the unit of local government's chief administrative official, to use officers, employees, agents and facilities of the unit of local government for such purposes and upon such terms as may be mutually agreeable;
- (6) To retain and employ counsel, auditors, engineers and private consultants on an annual salary, contract basis, or otherwise for rendering professional or technical services and advice;
- (7) To acquire, lease as lessee with or without option to purchase, hold, own, and use any franchise, property, real or personal, tangible or intangible, or any interest therein and to sell, lease as lessor with or without option to purchase, transfer (or dispose thereof) whenever the same is no longer required for purposes of the Authority, or exchange same for other property or rights which

are useful for the Authority's purposes, including but not necessarily limited to parking facilities;

- (7a) To enhance mobility within the region and promote sound growth patterns through joint transit development projects as generally described by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) policy at 62 Fed. Reg. 12266 (1997) and implementing guidelines in FTA Circular 9300.1A, Appendix B, as the policy and guidance may be amended; and, with respect to the planning, construction, and operation of joint transit development projects, upon the governing board's adoption of policies and procedures to ensure fair and open competition, to select developers or development teams in substantially the same manner as permitted by G.S. 143-129(h); and to enter into development agreements with public, private, or nonprofit entities to undertake the planning, construction, and operation of joint transit development projects.
- (8) To acquire by gift, purchase, lease as lessee with or without option to purchase or otherwise to construct, improve, maintain, repair, operate or administer any component parts of a public transportation system or to contract for the maintenance, operation or administration thereof or to lease as lessor the same for maintenance, operation, or administration by private parties, including but not necessarily limited to parking facilities;
- (9) To make or enter into contracts, agreements, deeds, leases with or without option to purchase, conveyances or other instruments, including contracts and agreements with the United States, the State of North Carolina, and units of local government;
- (9a) To purchase or finance real or personal property in the manner provided for cities and counties under G.S. 160A-20;
- (10) To surrender to the State of North Carolina any property no longer required by the Authority;
- (11) To develop and make data, plans, information, surveys and studies of public transportation facilities within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority, to prepare and make recommendations in regard thereto;
- (12) To enter in a reasonable manner lands, waters or premises for the purpose of making surveys, soundings, drillings, and examinations whereby such entry shall not be deemed a trespass except that the Authority shall be liable for any actual and consequential damages resulting from such entries;
- (13) To develop and carry out demonstration projects;
- (14) To make, enter into, and perform contracts with private parties, and public transportation companies with respect to the management and operation of public passenger transportation;
- (15) To make, enter into, and perform contracts with any public utility, railroad or transportation company for the joint use of property or rights, for the establishment of through routes, joint fares or transfer of passengers;
- (16) To make, enter into, and perform agreements with governmental entities for payments to the Authority for the transportation of persons for whom the governmental entities desire transportation;
- (17) With the consent of the unit of local government which would otherwise have jurisdiction to exercise the powers enumerated in this subdivision: to issue

certificates of public convenience and necessity; and to grant franchises and enter into franchise agreements and in all respects to regulate the operation of buses, taxicabs and other methods of public passenger transportation which originate and terminate within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority as fully as the unit of local government is now or hereafter empowered to do within the territorial jurisdiction of the unit of local government;

- (18) To operate public transportation systems and to enter into and perform contracts to operate public transportation services and facilities and to own or lease property, facilities and equipment necessary or convenient therefor, and to rent, lease or otherwise sell the right to do so to any person, public or private; further, to obtain grants, loans and assistance from the United States, the State of North Carolina, any public body, or any private source whatsoever, but may not operate or contract for the operation of public transportation systems outside the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority except as provided by subdivision (20) of this section;
- (19) To enter into and perform contracts and agreements with other public transportation authorities, regional public transportation authorities or units of local government pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 160A-460 through 160A-464 (Part 1 of Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes); further to enter into contracts and agreements with private transportation companies, but this subdivision does not authorize the operation of, or contracting for the operation of, service of a public transportation system outside the service area of the Authority;
- (20) To operate public transportation systems extending service into any political subdivision of the State of North Carolina unless a particular unit of local government operating its own public transportation system or franchising the operation of a public transportation system by majority vote of its governing board, shall deny consent, but such service may not extend more than 10 miles outside of the territorial jurisdiction of the authority, except that vanpool and carpool service shall not be subject to that mileage limitation;
- (21) Except as restricted by covenants in bonds, notes, or equipment trust certificates, to set in its sole discretion rates, fees and charges for use of its public transportation system;
- (22) To do all things necessary or convenient to carry out its purpose and to exercise the powers granted to the Authority;
- (23) To collect or contract for the collection of taxes which it is authorized by law to levy;
- (24) To issue bonds or other obligations of the Authority as provided by law and apply the proceeds thereof to the financing of any public transportation system or any part thereof and to refund, whether or not in advance of maturity or the earliest redemption date, any such bonds or other obligations; and
- (25) To contract for, or to provide and maintain, with respect to the facilities and property owned, leased with or without option to purchase, operated or under the control of the Authority, and within the territory thereof, a security force to protect persons and property, dispense unlawful or dangerous assemblages and assemblages which obstruct full and free passage, control pedestrian and

vehicular traffic, and otherwise preserve and protect the public peace, health, and safety; for these purposes a member of such force shall be a peace officer and, as such, shall have authority equivalent to the authority of a police officer of the city or county in which said member of such force is discharging such duties.

- (26) To contract for the purchase, lease, or other acquisition of any apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment for public transit purposes with any person or entity that, within the previous 60 months, after having completed a public formal bid process substantially similar to that required by Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes or through the competitive proposal method provided in G.S. 143-129(h), has contracted to furnish the apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment to any unit or agency approved in G.S. 143-129(g) if the person or entity is willing to furnish the items at the same or more favorable prices, terms, and conditions as those provided under the contract with the other unit or agency. Any purchase made under this section shall be approved by the Board of Trustees as provided in G.S. 143-129(g). (1989, c. 740, s. 1; 1998-70, s. 2; 2000-67, s. 25.6; 2003-197, s. 2.)

§ 160A-611. Authority of Utilities Commission not affected.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this Article, nothing in this Article shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect the power or authority of the North Carolina Utilities Commission or the right of appeal to the North Carolina Utilities Commission as provided by law.

(b) The North Carolina Utilities Commission shall not have jurisdiction over rates, fees, charges, routes, and schedules of an Authority for service within its territorial jurisdiction. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-612. Fiscal accountability.

An Authority is a public authority subject to the provisions of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-613. Funds.

(a) The establishment and operation of an Authority are governmental functions and constitute a public purpose, and the State of North Carolina and any unit of local government may appropriate funds to support the establishment and operation of the Authority. The State of North Carolina and any unit of local government may also dedicate, sell, convey, donate or lease any of their interests in any property to the Authority. An authority may apply for grants from the State of North Carolina, or from the United States or any department, agency, or instrumentality thereof. The Department of Transportation may allocate to an authority any funds appropriated for public transportation, or any funds whose use is not restricted by law.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 2010-95, s. 41, effective July 17, 2010.

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of G.S. 159-18, the Board of Trustees may accumulate moneys from any source authorized by this Article or by Article 50 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes in a capital reserve fund for any authorized purpose of the Authority. Notwithstanding any provision of G.S. 159-19 or G.S. 159-22, the Board of

Trustees may, by amendment to the resolution establishing a capital reserve fund, withdraw moneys accumulated in a fund for noncapital purposes if the capital outlay purpose for which the fund was created is no longer viable, as determined by a majority of the Board of Trustees. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the provisions of Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes shall control the establishment of capital reserve funds by the Authority. (1989, c. 740, s. 1; 1991, c. 666, s. 1; 2001-424, s. 27.28; 2010-95, s. 41.)

§ 160A-613.1. Competition.

No equipment of the authority may be used for charter, tour, or sight-seeing service. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-614. Effect on existing franchises and operations.

Creation of the Authority shall not have an effect on any existing franchises granted by any unit of local government; such existing franchises shall continue in full force and effect until legally terminated; further, all ordinances and resolutions of the unit of local government regulating local public transportation systems, bus operations, and taxicabs shall continue in full force and effect now and in the future, unless superseded by regulations of the Authority; such superseding, if any, may occur only on the basis of prior mutual agreement between the Authority and the respective unit of local government. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-615. Termination.

The Board of Trustees may terminate the existence of the Authority at any time when it has no outstanding indebtedness. In the event of such termination, all property and assets of the Authority not otherwise encumbered shall automatically become the property of the State of North Carolina, and the State of North Carolina shall succeed to all rights, obligations, and liabilities of the Authority. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-616. Controlling provisions.

Insofar as the provisions of this Article are not consistent with the provisions of any other law, public or private, the provisions of this Article shall be controlling. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-617. Bonds and notes authorized.

In addition to the powers granted by this Article, the Authority may issue bonds and notes pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Bond Act and the Local Government Revenue Bond Act for the purpose of financing public transportation systems or any part thereof and to refund such bonds and notes, whether or not in advance of their maturity or earliest redemption date. Any bond order must be approved by resolution adopted by the special tax board of the Authority and in the case of a bond order under the Local Government Bond Act also by the board of county commissioners of each county organizing the authority. To pay any bond or note issued under the Local Government Bond Act, the Authority may not pledge the levy of any ad valorem tax, but only a tax or taxes it is authorized to levy. (1989, c. 740, s. 1; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1024, s. 41; 1991, c. 666, s. 5.)

§ 160A-618. Equipment trust certificates.

In addition to the powers here and before granted, the Authority shall have continuing power to purchase equipment, and in connection therewith execute agreements, leases with or without option to purchase, or equipment trust certificates. All money required to be paid by the Authority under the provisions of such agreements, leases with or without option to purchase, and equipment trust certificates shall be payable solely from the fares, fees, rentals, charges, revenues, and earnings of the Authority, monies derived from the sale of any surplus property of the Authority and gifts, grants, and contributions from any source whatever. Payment for such equipment or rentals therefore, may be made in installments; the deferred installments may be evidenced by equipment trust certificates payable solely from the aforesaid revenues or receipts and title to such equipment may or may not vest in the Authority until the equipment trust certificates are paid. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-619. Power of eminent domain.

(a) The Authority shall have continuing power to acquire, by gift, grant, devise, exchange, purchase, lease with or without option to purchase, or any other lawful method, including but not limited to the power of eminent domain, the fee or any lesser interest in real or personal property for use by the Authority.

(b) Exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Authority shall be in accordance with Chapter 40A of the General Statutes. (1989, c. 740, s. 1; 2011-284, s. 121.)

§ 160A-620. Tax exemption.

The property of the Authority, both real and personal, its acts, activities and income shall be exempt from any tax or tax obligation; in the event of any lease of Authority property, or other arrangement which amounts to a leasehold interest, to a private party, this exemption shall not apply to the value of such leasehold interest nor shall it apply to the income of the lessee. Otherwise, however, for the purpose of taxation, when property of the Authority is leased to private parties solely for the purpose of the Authority, the acts and activities of the lessee shall be considered as the acts and activities of the Authority and the exemption. The interest on bonds or obligations issued by the Authority shall be exempt from State taxes. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-621. Removal and relocation of utility structures.

(a) The Authority shall have the power to require any public utility, railroad, or other public service corporation owning or operating any installations, structures, equipment, apparatus, appliances or facilities in, upon, under, over, across or along any ways on which the Authority has the right to own, construct, operate or maintain its public transportation system, to relocate such installation, structures, equipment, apparatus, appliances or facilities from their locations, or, in the sole discretion of the affected public utility, railroad, or other public service corporation, to remove such installations, structures, equipment, apparatus, appliances or facilities from their locations.

(b) If the owner or operator thereof fails or refuses to relocate them, the Authority may proceed to do so.

(b1) The Authority shall provide any necessary new locations and necessary real estate interests for such relocation, and for that purpose the power of eminent domain as provided in G.S. 160A-619 may be exercised provided the new locations shall not be in, on or above, a public highway; the Authority may also acquire the necessary new locations by purchase or otherwise.

(b2) Any affected public utility, railroad or other public service corporation shall be compensated for any real estate interest taken in a manner consistent with G.S. 160A-619, subject to the right of the Authority to reduce the compensation due by the value of any property exchanged under this section.

(b3) The method and procedures of a particular adjustment to the facilities of a public utility, railroad or other public service corporation shall be covered by an agreement between the Authority and the affected party or parties.

(c) The Authority shall reimburse the public utility, railroad or other public service corporation, for the cost of relocations or removals which shall be the entire amount paid or incurred by the utility properly attributable thereto after deducting the cost of any increase in the service capacity of the new installations, structures, equipment, apparatus, appliances or facilities and any salvage value derived from the old installations, structures, equipment, apparatus or appliances. (1989, c. 740, s. 1.)

§ 160A-622. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 160A-623. Regional Transportation Authority registration tax.

In accordance with Article 51 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes, an Authority organized under this Article may levy an annual license tax upon any motor vehicle with a tax situs within its territorial jurisdiction as defined by G.S. 160A-602. A tax levied under this section before the enactment of Article 51 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes is considered a tax levied under Article 51 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes. (1991, c. 666, s. 2; 1993, c. 382, s. 1; c. 485, s. 28; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 34; 1997-417, s. 5.)

§ 160A-624. Recommendation of additional revenue sources.

The Authority may make recommendations to the General Assembly concerning additional revenue sources, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Annual vehicle registration fees;
- (2) Ad valorem taxes;
- (3) Local land transfer taxes;
- (4) Drivers license fees;
- (5) Sales taxes on automobile parts and accessories; and
- (6) Motor fuels taxes.

Any additional revenue sources for an Authority must be approved by the General Assembly. (1991, c. 666, s. 4.)

§ 160A-625. Reports to the General Assembly.

The Authority shall annually submit to the General Assembly, on or before February 1, its annual operating report, including a report of its administrative expenditures, and its audited financial report. In odd-numbered years, the report shall be submitted to the Senate and House Transportation Committees. In even-numbered years, the report shall be submitted to the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee. (1993, c. 382, s. 2.)

§ 160A-626. Limitations on rail transportation liability.

- (a) As used in this section:

- (1) "Claim" means a claim, action, suit, or request for damages, whether compensatory, punitive, or otherwise, made by any person or entity against:
 - a. The Authority, a railroad, or an operating rights railroad; or
 - b. An officer, director, trustee, employee, parent, subsidiary, or affiliated corporation as defined in G.S. 105-130.2, or agent of: the Authority, a railroad, or an operating rights railroad.
- (2) "Operating rights railroad" means a railroad corporation or railroad company that, prior to January 1, 2001, was granted operating rights by a State-Owned Railroad Company or operated over the property of a State-Owned Railroad Company under a claim of right over or adjacent to facilities used by or on behalf of the Authority.
- (3) "Passenger rail services" means the transportation of rail passengers by or on behalf of the Authority and all services performed by a railroad pursuant to a contract with the Authority in connection with the transportation of rail passengers, including, but not limited to, the operation of trains; the use of right of way, trackage, public or private roadway and rail crossings, equipment, or station areas or appurtenant facilities; the design, construction, reconstruction, operation, or maintenance of rail related equipment, tracks, and any appurtenant facilities; or the provision of access rights over or adjacent to lines owned by the Authority or a railroad, or otherwise occupied by the Authority or a railroad, pursuant to charter grant, fee simple deed, lease, easement, license, trackage rights, or other form of ownership or authorized use.
- (4) "Railroad" means a railroad corporation or railroad company, including a State-Owned Railroad Company as defined in G.S. 124-11, that has entered into any contracts or operating agreements of any kind with the Authority concerning passenger rail services.

(b) Contracts Allocating Financial Responsibility Authorized. – The Authority may contract with any railroad to allocate financial responsibility for passenger rail services claims, including, but not limited to, the execution of indemnity agreements, notwithstanding any other statutory, common law, public policy, or other prohibition against same, and regardless of the nature of the claim or the conduct giving rise to such claim.

(c) Insurance Required. –

- (1) If the Authority enters into any contract authorized by subsection (b) of this section, the contract shall require the Authority to secure and maintain, upon and after the commencement of the operation of trains by or on behalf of the Authority, a liability insurance policy covering the liability of the parties to the contract, a State-Owned Railroad Company as defined in G.S. 124-11 that owns or claims an interest in any real property subject to the contract, and any operating rights railroad for all claims for property damage, personal injury, bodily injury, and death

arising out of or related to passenger rail services. The policy shall name the parties to the contract, a State-Owned Railroad Company as defined in G.S. 124-11 that owns or claims an interest in any real property subject to the contract, and any operating rights railroad as named insureds and shall have policy limits of not less than two hundred million dollars (\$200,000,000) per single accident or incident, and may include a self insured retention in an amount of not more than five million dollars (\$5,000,000).

- (2) If the Authority does not enter into any contract authorized by subsection (b) of this section, upon and after the commencement of the operation of trains by or on behalf of the Authority, the Authority shall secure and maintain a liability insurance policy, with policy limits and a self-insured retention consistent with subdivision (1) of this subsection, for all claims for property damage, personal injury, bodily injury, and death arising out of or related to passenger rail services.

(d) **Liability Limit.** – The aggregate liability of the Authority, the parties to the contract or contracts authorized by subsection (b) of this section, a State-Owned Railroad Company as defined in G.S. 124-11, and any operating rights railroad for all claims arising from a single accident or incident related to passenger rail services for property damage, personal injury, bodily injury, and death is limited to two hundred million dollars (\$200,000,000) per single accident or incident or to any proceeds available under any insurance policy secured pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, whichever is greater.

(e) **Effect on Other Laws.** – This section shall not affect the damages that may be recovered under the Federal Employers' Liability Act, 45 U.S.C. § 51, et seq., (1908); or under Article 1 of Chapter 97 of the General Statutes. (2002-78, s. 1; 2012-79, s. 1.14(g).)

§ 160A-627. Civil liability.

Except as provided in G.S. 160A-626, the Authority shall be deemed a city for purposes of civil liability pursuant to G.S. 160A-485. Governmental immunity of the Authority is waived to a minimum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) per single accident or incident. The Authority shall maintain a minimum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) per single accident or incident of liability insurance. Participation in a local government risk pool pursuant to Article 23 of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes shall be deemed to be the purchase of insurance for the purpose of this section. (2005-160, s. 1.)

§ 160A-628. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 160A-629. Reserved for future codification purposes.